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# My "Chinese" San Francisco



IT WAS CHIANG YEE, THE EMINENT AUTHOR-ARTIST OF A SCORE OF "Silent Traveller" books, who said, "No one can comprehend Chinese landscape painting without knowing the city of San Francisco."

I think that what Yee referred to was the extraordinary similarity between the Bay of San Francisco—its islands, fog, interplay of land and sea—and Chinese landscape painting.

Native of this fog-borne, sun-kissed city, I was born in an atmosphere more Chinese than China. In my travels to the Orient, I have yet to find a city—with the possible exception of Hangchou—so arresting in its water-land configurations, as is "my" San Francisco.

I grew up, in San Francisco, with parents who, with their own enthusiasms, fostered in me (but to emerge only at a far later date) a dedication to Chinese culture.

My father, a lawyer, was a lover of the sea; and I well remember, as a child, walking with him around Land's End, that unique spit of land between the Presidio and the Beach, which gives upon the open ocean. Trailing at the rear, and hurrying to keep up with my Daddy, I noticed that my inhalations and exhalations seemed to match the thunderous incomings and outgoings of the sea. (It was years later that I was to come upon the Chinese verbalization of this, of man's

identity with nature, in the writings of Lao-tzu, Confucius, and the Buddha.)

At the same time that my Dad was bringing me to the ocean, my Mother was bringing me to Chinatown, which I think lay the groundwork for my enthusiasm for the arts of China. We lived on Powell Street, up beyond its crest, at the corner of Sacramento Street, and frequently would walk "downtown" by way of Chinatown.

To be in Chinatown seemed to me like travelling at home. I loved it. Sights and sounds and smells were unusual and exotic. Buildings had upward flaring rooftops and were colorful, with a predominance of red. Signs were black and white, and were undecipherable but glamorous. Little children, about my size, wore "pigtails" down their backs. Shop windows proffered extraordinary wares that seemed like radiant toys. (The Chinatown showcases were later to mature into vitrines of porcelains, jades, and bronzes.)

A special shop we used to frequent on Grant Avenue in Chinatown was called "Suey Chong"; and the proprietor, whom we used to call "Suey Chong" (but whose real name I now know to be Yiu Tung) was a silk and curio importer. His walls were lined with bolts of extraordinarily colorful silks in every hue. Mom and I would select silks there for me to wear at home—one color for the jacket, another for the pants; and then we would select, from a vast selection, a pair of harmonizing and embroidered Chinese slippers.

In the matter of home decor, I grew up in an environment of Chinese and Japanese decorative arts. My Mother's home was full of Chinese artifacts, including a pair of peacocks which I now judge to be eighteenth-century "famille verte"... and a large alabaster bowl on a gilt stand, ornamented with the geometric "cloud and thunder" pattern of "immortality," sometimes also called "the swastika fret."

A Hillsborough home I used to frequent in my Stanford days featured a Japanese screen mounted as a picture on the wall. It depicted a pair of ducks, which I now recognize as the Chinese (and derivatively Japanese) symbol of a happy marriage.

A San Francisco home where I had among the best times of my youth was a salon, to which I had access as a good friend of the daughter. The hosts frequently entertained visiting artists, writers, and celebrities, at parties at which the beloved art patron Albert or "Mickey" Bender was a "regular." Walls at their Washington Street home were lined with Japanese prints, including "the fish" of Hiroshige (and the fish has now become one of my favorite Chinese symbols, that of "strength," because it has the fortitude to "swim up against the stream").

In those days, when still a student at Stanford University, I felt especially close to Lake Lagunita, and walked around it for serenity and relaxation before and after final examinations. (I was later to learn that Lao-tzu urged man to return to nature for serenity and peace.)

After graduating from Stanford University, I worked with Joseph Henry Jackson, then reputed to be the only Western bookman with a national reputation, as book-reviewer for the *San Francisco Chronicle*. I would go down to his office every Thursday, and select a book, in non-fiction or the arts, to review for the Sunday paper.

Already, in those days, my predisposition for the Orient began to surface. One day a title on a spine seduced me from a shelf: *Assigned to Adventure*. I thumbed through the pages and found it to be a newspaper woman's story about her experiences in China. The author, Irene Corbally Kuhn, was to appear years later in my New York life; and we were to enjoy many lunches together in New York's Chinatown.

It was "Mickey" Bender who, when he came to my wedding reception in my Mother's home, brought me as a present my very first piece of Chinese art. Today it sits prominently beside my phone, as a paperweight. It is a handsome buckle with a centered slab of rosequartz, flanked with jade and set in gold. The gold is ornamented, once again, with the swastika fret or cloud and thunder motif of "immortality," which so much resembles the Greek key.

But the big push in my Orientalism happened after I married and moved to New York. Sometimes I wonder, was I simply homesick?

Shortly after my move, my Mother wanted a photograph of me; and I called up Arnold Genthe, the photographer not only of portraits but of San Francisco and Chinatown. Arnold Genthe, as I, had moved from San Francisco to New York; and I remembered my Mother's having known him and having spoken of him. He immediately invited me, that afternoon, to a studio party; and I went up in the elevator with Lin Yutang. Then he asked me to go with him, the next day, to visit C. T. Loo.

I did not know at the time that C. T. Loo was the most important Chinese art dealer in the world; but I did know that to go to his gallery was a great joy for me, that I felt "at home" there, that the glowing cases of jades and porcelains and bronzes reminded me of San Francisco's Chinatown. For years, I went to have tea with him, in his gallery, once a week. In those memorable student-teacher interchanges, I learned a bit about Chinese art, and gradually acquired, at bargain prices, incomparable Chinese antiquities—in sculpture, porcelain, and furniture.

One day, Mr. Loo showed me a "Chinese landscape painting." I knew nothing about Chinese landscape painting. I had never heard of "Shan-Shui" (mountain-water) or "Yang and Yin" (positive-negative) or any of the other aspects of Chinese art iconography. But I did know that looking at this "Chinese landscape painting"

brought me back to San Francisco. I was home again.

For years, I kept this new passion for Chinese landscape painting to myself, fearful that should I mention to anyone that a picture brought me back to San Francisco, I might be suspected as delusory. I felt my reaction validated long later, when I came across a quotation from Tsung Ping, sixth-century art critic, who said, "The well-executed painting will *take the place of* nature. . . . No need to walk on precipitous cliffs." Now, finally on firm ground, I could not only talk about Chinese landscape painting; I could also write about it.

I have always written—since my days with the San Francisco Chronicle—for periodicals and newspapers, including the New York Times and the New York Herald-Tribune—on travel, fashion, and

personalities. It was my Dad who used to say to me in San Francisco, "Do something with your writing." And then it was my Uncle, who suggested to me in San Francisco, "Why don't you specialize in Chinese? This is a day of specialization. And you're always down in Chinatown..."

Shortly thereafter, I picked up a copy of Writer's Digest magazine, and noticed that the Christian Science Monitor was interested in essays. "The 'essay," I thought, with interest. "That would give me the opportunity to write in the first person, for a change, instead of my accustomed objectivity." And I sent, as the article suggested, a query letter to the editor, asking if they would be interested in essays on Chinese culture. This episode took place about fifteen years ago, and I have been contributing essays on Chinese culture to the Christian Science Monitor ever since.

Today my Chinese life proliferates, like a California poppy, into a multifaceted, yet consistent, complex. It includes love affairs with Chinese artistic, philosophic, symbolic thought... with all the arts, now including music... with the garden, with food, and with friends. And all these fields conjoin beneath the same umbrella.

In San Francisco, I am still magnetized and mesmerized by the Bay, the ocean, and by Chinatown; and on every trip to "the City," happily and humbly survey them all. But today, my visits to the Bay, the ocean, and to Chinatown are enriched, through a familiarity with Chinese culture.

I see in all of them the positives and negatives of Chinese thought; and further, I now see myself as a small but inseparable particle of "the view"—be it the crashing waves that still embrace Land's End or the bridges (inseparable from man) that circumvent the Bay. And Chinatown is still for me the jazzy thrill of yesterday; but now it is even more. There are profound meanings now, expressions of the dichotomy of "Yang and Yin," even in the upturned rooftops of the corner lantern posts.

I now see Chinese landscape painting, and especially the landscape handscroll, which I collect, as a central showcase of Chinese thought.

It projects both the concept of man's identity with nature, and the sense of contrast which runs so pervasively through all of Chinese

thought. It is literature at the same time that it is art.

I "read" a Chinese landscape painting as I would "read" a book. I look for content and for style. I look for the philosophic positives and negatives (often represented by the mountains and the water). I find an individual with whom I can identify; he is often represented by a house, a bridge, a boat, or a pavilion. And in the process of my return to nature, I experience a sense of security and contentment, as was promised by the philosophers of long ago.

I find that I am neither unique nor unprecedented, in my enthusiasm for the handscroll. It appears a matter of recorded fact that the handscroll, rolling and unrolling horizontally as it does, was the very first book in the history of the book. It had the Latin name "volumen," which, in time, as "volume," has become intelligible to all. It is a format that goes back to the Buddhistic priests who, in the fifth century B.C., carried up their sleeves and in their pockets their small rolls of philosophic thought.

In my efforts to better comprehend the all-encompassing synthesis of Chinese culture, there are several books which prove basic to my attempt at understanding. One, and perhaps the most important, is the *Tao te Ching* (or *The Way and its Power*) of Lao-tzu.

Lao-tzu is the assumed fifth-century B.C. founder of Taoism; and it is Taoism which is the wellspring of artistic creativity, paralleling the ethical reservoir of Confucianism. "Be like the water," the *Tao te Ching* suggests, "which is so soft, yet has the strength to crush the hardest rock." And again, "In the vase or in the wheel, the important space is the space where there is nothing." And still again, "Those who walk the longest strides do not go the farthest."

Another book which I find a constant tool, not only in my work but also in my life, is the *Encyclopedia of Chinese Symbolism and Art Motives* by C. A. S. Williams. Does the chrysanthemum stand for "age" because it is the last flower blooming in the winter garden? Find it in Williams. The plum blossom, "strength" because it blooms

in winter? Find it in Williams. The peony, "luxury" because it is so grand a flower? Again, find it in Williams, along with countless more.

In addition to my writing for the *Christian Science Monitor*, and trying generally to probe the essence of Chinese thought, I very much enjoy in New York my involvement with the China Institute in America. It is there that I studied with my several mentors, all of them authors: Chiang Yee (*The Chinese Eye, The Silent Traveller in San Francisco*, etc., etc.); C. C.Wang (*Mountains of the Mind*); Leon Chang (*La Calligraphie Chinoise*); and Wango Weng (*China: a History in Art*, etc.).

In the Summer of 1983, the annual University of San Francisco symposium was devoted to Chinese culture; and Wango Weng, president of China Institute, came out to San Francisco to be the moderator. I had known Wango for many years, since our daughters were classmates in New York in grammar school. With him to San Francisco came the major Sinologists from all across the country, to participate in the conference, which could not have been more delightful. I well recall the climactic night, of dinner at the St. Francis Yacht Club, when the incomparable view of land and sea seemed to underscore the content of the conference.

In the Fall of 1984, China Institute presented in New York the first exhibition of Chinese Rare Books to have been shown in the Western world. I was pleased to have suggested the subject for the show at an art committee meeting of the Institute, and also to have suggested as guest curator Soren Edgren of Los Angeles and Carmel. It will be remembered that both paper and printing had their origins in China; and the exhibition sparked enthusiasm for the subject of Chinese books nationwide, including Stanford in the west as well as Harvard in the east.

It seems that there is today a two-way street between San Francisco and New York, in the field of Chinese culture. Exhibitions originating in one city move on later to go on exhibition in the other. There is a bi-coastal movement between scholars, professors,

dealers, and collectors—all of whom shuttle regularly back and forth for meetings, symposiums, lectures, and art openings—and most of them are authors.

In the Spring of 1985, the University of California's James Cahill and Stanford University's Michael Sullivan joined, at the Metropolitan Museum in New York, their colleagues from around the world, to celebrate the acquisition, by the Museum, of the John Crawford Collection of Chinese Painting and Calligraphy, reputedly the preeminent collection of the world in non-Chinese hands. A dramatic feature of the Metropolitan symposium was the simultaneous appearance and participation, on center stage, of experts from Peking and Taipei!

I, too, have today become "bi-coastal," having inherited a small apartment on top of Russian Hill in San Francisco, and having become enabled to spend part of every year in the environs I know and love so well.

On my last visit to "the City," I came across a rave review in the San Francisco Chronicle of a book on Genthe's Chinatown, written by John Tchen. "My" John Tchen, director of the Chinatown History Project in New York, had astounded me, on my first visit to his Manhattan office, with a photograph of the San Francisco Chinatown featured on the wall by the inimitable Arnold Genthe. On my return to New York, I called and asked him if the book were his. He answered that, not only was it his, but that it had just won a national book award!

Also on my last visit to "the City," I attended the first showing of contemporary Chinese artists at the Chinese Culture Center—an exhibit which had been organized in China by Lucy Lim, executive director of the Center. It was later to go on national tour, and I was to see it again at the Asia Society in New York. I was, and am, delighted to observe in the exhibit the continuance of the tradition among the Chinese artists of today, including even a landscape handscroll of the gorges of the Yangtse!

Sometimes today, in San Francisco, when I look out from my

vantage point and contemplate the Bay, a sense of incredulity comes over me; and I wonder, "Is this a Chinese landscape painting?"

#### SUGGESTED READING LIST

Three Ways of Thought in Ancient China. Arthur Waley. Doubleday, 1939. Includes lively anecdotal confrontation of Taoism and Confucianism, by the famous scholar and translator formerly with the British Museum.

Best of an Old Friend. Lin Yutang. Mason/Charter, 1975

Memorable excerpts from the author's My Country and My People, etc., which, in the 1930's, brought Chinese cultural awareness to America.

Chinese Painting. James Cahill. Skira, 1960.

A fine and well-illustrated historical coverage of Chinese painting, by the eminent professor at University of California, Berkeley.

The Three Perfections. Michael Sullivan. Braziller, 1980.

The interrelationship of painting, poetry, and calligraphy, by the outstanding professor at Oxford and Stanford.

The Chinese Garden. Maggie Keswick. Rizzoli, 1981.

A lively scholarly presentation of the garden and its meaning, bringing it into the totality of Chinese culture.

Chinese Jades through Five Centuries. Joan Hartman. Tuttle, 1969. Coverage of the art history of Chinese jade, by the director of New York's Institute for Asian Studies, Inc.

Handbook of Chinese Ceramics. Suzanne Valenstein. Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1975.

Coverage of the development and varieties of Chinese porcelain, by the assistant curator of Far Eastern Art at New York's Metropolitan Museum.

Ancient Chinese Bronzes. William Watson. Faber & Faber, 1977.

A scholarly, well-illustrated, and informative presentation, by the former director of the Sir Percival David Collection in London.

Chinese Connoisseurship. Sir Percival David. Praeger, 1971.

Far-ranging commentary on Chinese art and culture, by the world-famous authority, whose house and collection is today at London University.

Chinese Monumental Art. Peter C. Swann. Viking, 1963.

Descriptions, analyses, and illustrations of major Chinese sculptures, including the cave complexes and "spirit walks," by the former editor of the British quarterly, *Oriental Art*.

Palace Museum, Peking. Wango Weng & Yang Boda. Abrams, 1982.

A seminal work, far-ranging in coverage, co-authored by the president of China Institute in America and the vice-director of the Palace Museum, Peking.

Sunflower Splendor. ed. Liu & Lo. Doubleday, 1979.

Three thousand years of Chinese poetry, including top poets (Li Po and Tu Fu), as well as top translators (Arthur Waley and Jonathan Chaves).

Chinese Calligraphy. Chiang Yee. Harvard, 1973.

An illustrated historical analysis of Chinese calligraphy (or writing) by the distinguished erstwhile scholar who in 1956 delivered the Phi Beta Kappa oration at Harvard.

Chinese Rare Books. Soren Edgren et al. China Institute, 1984. Informative essays on printing, typography, illustration, covering a recent exhibition of Chinese rare books in American collections.

China's Crafts. Roberta Stalberg. China's Books & Periodicals, 1980.

Excellent coverage of crafts, from fabrics to jades, along with explanations of symbolism and art motifs, together with fine illustrative line drawings.

Chinese Houses & Gardens. Henry Inn (ed. Shao Shang Lee). Bonanza (Crown), 1950.

Delightful coverage of the Chinese house and garden, interpreting the elements with their philosophic import.

Years that were Fat. George Kates. Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1983.

Enchanting personal reminiscences of an American who lived in Peking in the 1930's.

The Chinese Banquet Cook Book. Eileen Yin-fei Lo. Crown, 1985.

Relating gastronomy to philosophy and symbolism, Ms. Lo brings her cookbook into the universal scope of Chinese art.

Tai-chi Ch'uan. Sophia Delza. State University of New York, 1985. Analysis of the ancient-modern exercise routine for mind and body, by the teacher to the United Nations, etc.

The Chinese Catalogue. Laube & Walker. Hippocrene, 1985.
Succinct, informative coverage of American resources of things Chinese, from fine arts to foods, coast to coast.

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MARY TANENBAUM, native of San Francisco and Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Stanford University, lives in San Francisco and New York.

In both San Francisco and New York, she has strong Chinese affiliations. She is member of both the Chinese Culture Center of San Francisco and the China Institute in America in New York, where she is member of the Art Committee and sponsor of the School of Chinese Studies.

As writer on Chinese culture, she is contributor to the *Christian Science Monitor*; and her essays are reprinted in Chinese translation in the *China Daily News* of Taiwan.

She derives frequent inspiration for her essays from her Chinese garden in New York and from her Bay view in San Francisco.



# The Zamorano Index to History of California by Hubert Howe Bancroft

This important two-volume work unlocks the contents of Bancroft's seven-volume History of California, published in San Francisco, 1884-1890. In addition to indexing the 5063 pages encompassed in this monumental work, The Zamorano Index also indexes the "Pioneer Register" found in installments at the end of volumes II through V. Compiled by members of the Zamorano Club, a long-time Los Angeles book collectors organization, and edited by Anna Marie and Everett Gordon Hager, The Zamorano Index runs to over 700 pages, conveniently split into two volumes. Designed to be a companion to the original publication, the two-volume set measures 6½" x 93%. It is printed in readable Schoolbook type on quality paper and bound in a sturdy binding. Priced at \$125.00 per set, plus postage/handling and California sales tax (where applicable), this highly useful index to Bancroft's History of California may be ordered from Bancroft Index, LAS/ADM 200, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA 90089-4012. Available December 1985.



# Star-Crossed Paths: Paul Landacre, Edward Weston, & Robinson Jeffers ANTHONY L. LEHMAN



when the artistic career of Paul Landacre culminated tragically with his suicide in 1963, the Californian by adoption was generally acknowledged to be the finest wood engraver in the United States. The National Academy of Design and The Society of American Artists had honored him with membership; there had been a plethora of one-man shows at such institutions as the Los Angeles County Museum, San Francisco's de Young Museum, and the Smithsonian Institution; even the Library of Congress had obtained numerous examples of his work for its permanent collection by awarding him coveted purchase prizes. Landacre's talent as a book illustrator, too, had enlivened over the years scores of publications, had secured several commissions from the Limited Editions Club, and resulted in no less than five Landacre-illustrated volumes being ultimately selected for inclusion in the prestigious "Fifty Books of the Year" competition.

In 1931, however, things were quite different for the struggling, relatively unknown artist. Sales of prints had been sparse despite the fact that Jake Zeitlin sponsored a one-man show the year before at his downtown Los Angeles bookstore and continued to display a few samples of Landacre's work on the walls of the shop. Only two modest prizes had attracted a modicum of attention, a second place

at the Arizona State Fair in 1928 for the engraving "Downpour," and a certificate as one of the Fifty Prints of the Year in 1930 for "Physics Building, U.C.L.A." But because neither award yielded anything monetary, the artist's wife, Margaret, faithfully continued to support her husband on a barely sufficient clerk's wages.

At this juncture in his life, Paul Landacre resolved to gather a representative handful of his prints into a book—his first ever. The decision to publish *California Hills and Other Wood-engravings* was to bring together, though only briefly and through the postal service at that, three of California's most notable creative artists: poet Robinson Jeffers, photographer Edward Weston, and Landacre himself.

The genesis of *California Hills* can be traced back to 1930 when neighbors Fay Fuqua and Ethel Ingalls invited Paul and Margaret Landacre to accompany them on an automobile trip to the Big Sur/Carmel area of Northern California. The Landacres did not own a car at the time (indeed, what resources they had went into mortgage payments and groceries), so they gladly consented to go along. It would be, after all, an excellent opportunity for Paul to see and sketch some of the heralded coastline scenery. Miss Fuqua knew Edward Weston especially well and, because he was going to be temporarily out of town, she made arrangements for the group to stay in the house he was then renting in Carmel.

As expected, the vacation proved both restful and immensely productive for Landacre. From the many sketches he enthusiastically made, evolved some of his most exquisite and treasured woodengravings, works such as "Evening, Carmel," "Monterey Hills," "Point Sur," "Old Ranch, Big Sur," and "Headland, Big Sur Coast." He must also have seen at the time the Robinson Jeffers homestead because an accurately rendered engraving of "Hawk Tower" would grace an article by the poet in *The Colophon*, Part Ten, 1932, entitled "First Book: Robinson Jeffers," the initial product, incidentally, of the Ward Ritchie Press. It was Ward Ritchie himself who undoubtedly made the arrangements to use the "Hawk Tower" engraving, for the artist and the poet would regrettably

never meet, though each would produce in his respective art form a unique and memorable vision of the California coast.

That Landacre never personally met Edward Weston either can be inferred from the rather formal and diffident tone of Landacre's letter to the esteemed photographer. In it, the fledgling artist sought Weston's help in convincing Jeffers to write a foreword to the projected volume:

Los Angeles May 5, 1931

Dear Mr. Weston:

Our good friend Fay Fuqua assures me that I will not be presuming too much on your good nature in asking you to act as intermediary with Robinson Jeffers in regard to the foreword for my book on wood engravings.

I really haven't much hope of his writing it as I know he must be constantly annoyed by requests for this, that and the other thing and, of course, he may not care for my work anyway. I thought, however, it was a chance that couldn't be passed up entirely and I couldn't rest until I had made some effort in that direction. I am leaving the whole thing to your judgment (and convenience), and hope for the best.

One thing I would like to emphasize is that the Big Sur series was not done as a premeditated scheme to profit by Mr. Jeffers' writings of this country or his name. It was a natural result of a glorious trip to Carmel, as you know (being largely responsible for our enjoyment); but, since the Big Sur prints seem to be some of my strongest work, it seemed logical to make them the central motive of the book.

As far as I know now the book is to be called "California Hills and Other Wood-engravings" (by Paul Landacre) and I will include only the twelve wood engravings I am sending you. It is to be printed from the blocks which are boxwood. I can't say what the price is to be for some experimenting has to be done, but it will be on good stock and entirely presentable, for Young & McCallister do some of the finest printing in the west, having had editions in

the "Best Printed Books of the Year." Mr. Bruce McCallister is widely known for his interest in the highest type of graphic art.

The prints I am sending you are hand printed. For those on the heavier stock I used a handmade paper, (Shogun) printed wet on an old Washington hand press. The thinner ones are rubbed proofs. If any of these will repay you in the smallest measure for your trouble I want you to take them, and if Mr. Jeffers should be favorably inclined toward any of them I would be very glad for him to make a selection. Let me know if any duplicates should be needed.

It will not be necessary to send them back to me in case both you and Mr. Jeffers will have none of them. They may be left at the Denny Watrous studio—Bertha Wardell wrote to them about handling them some time ago but I have never sent them. Please leave them my address and they can get in touch with me or return them at my expense.

I shall be very much interested to hear whether or not Mr. Jeffers

is amenable to this plan.

I think that is all except that I want to apologize if I am thrusting this on you, Mr. Weston, and if you are too swamped with work just let it slide and I will understand.

Very sincerely yours, Paul Landacre

1916 Walcott Way Los Angeles, Calif.

Margaret Landacre was probably the author of the letter signed by her husband inasmuch as she routinely served as his amanuensis. But the humility had to be genuinely felt by both. How presumptuous a gamble it was for a virtually unsung artist to seek the blessing and sponsorship of one of America's most widely read and respected poets. And though Weston was willing to assist Landacre by intervening with his friend and fellow Carmelite, he attempted to provide a cushion against what he surely knew would be forthcoming—an inevitable refusal:

May 13, 1931

Dear Paul Landacre-

Prints arrived in good shape. How finely you re-create the California hills!

I walked out to Jeffers with them and your letter yesterday— "not home." They have no phone and it is quite a ways, and my car is torn down for awhile: also I am in the midst of moving, and getting off two exhibits, San Diego and Brooklyn Museum.

So be patient, and I will go again the first opportunity. In the meantime I have placed the prints with Denny Watrous not to miss a chance for sale. They will write you.

I will offer Jeffers a print, as you suggest, but I do not feel like accepting one for my small service, which I am glad to do. I know the time it takes to print, mount, ship, etc.!

I hope for your success with Jeffers, but do not be too hopeful. He is swamped with requests, and may have a negative policy. Anyhow, one can be a great poet, and not have a critical plastic sense.

Greetings-

Edward Weston

Some three weeks later, in a letter postmarked June 6, 1931, Robinson Jeffers graciously declined the opportunity to pen a foreword, though his astute and flattering comments on Landacre's wood-engravings (which he mistakenly confuses with woodcuts) must have been appreciated salve for the artist's disappointment:

June, 1931 Tor House, Carmel

Dear Mr. Landacre,

I was not here when Edward Weston first brought your woodcuts, so that he was not able to show them to us until yesterday.

My wife and I think they are admirable (Weston does too) but I am not able to write a foreword about them. I have had to refuse similar opportunities quite often, because my time and my energy are both limited, and if I should do it once it would be harder

to refuse on future occasions, so that I must just make a rule. Thank you for letting us see the pictures. The keen clear line, the solidity of your hills, and the splendid energy of "Grassfire," are vividly in my mind. It's kind of you to offer me a choice, but since I can't write about them I'd better not take one.

Sincerely, Robinson Jeffers

When California Hills and Other Wood-engravings was published near the close of 1931, it was an extremely handsome production. Bruce McCallister, dean of Los Angeles printers, created an edition of five hundred numbered copies autographed by the artist. The pressman, Harold Young, chose to print directly from Landacre's woodblocks and thereby skillfully retained the dramatic chiaroscuro of the artist's style. Not surprisingly, Landacre's first effort as a book illustrator was greeted with abundant approval—it was picked as one of the "Fifty Books of the Year" and sold well.

As it turned out, the foreword was ultimately supplied by Arthur Millier, an artist himself who also served as art critic for the Los Angeles Times. Millier properly praised Landacre for "the clarity of his technique and the beauty of his vision," and he observed the growth in skill and expressiveness evident when the early engravings were compared to more recent work (much of it the product of the memorable Big Sur/Carmel sojourn): "These earlier prints have neither the poise nor the technical richness of the mountain engravings. They are more rudimentary, both in feeling and treatment. But they are intensely individual, there being nothing akin to them in contemporary wood-engraving. An eventual Paul Landacre will probably combine these two strains, uniting his personal imaginative flair with his carefully developed 'classical realism.' Then we shall have some wood-engraver in California."

Arthur Millier proved to be prophetic as an increasingly talented Paul Landacre went on to achieve nationwide acclaim and respect as a wood engraver. Even today, nearly a quarter of a century after his death, his reputation endures, while his prints command ever loftier prices from discerning collectors. Ironically, California Hills and Other Wood-engravings, which originally sold for less than ten dollars, currently commands a premium of well over a thousand dollars when a coveted copy occasionally surfaces. It is disappointing, in retrospect, that Robinson Jeffers declined his small role in the project, for there is a striking kinship between his powerful, descriptive poetry and Landacre's dramatic visual rendering of the same Big Sur/Carmel coastline. And a page or two, even a paragraph, from the poet's hand would have certainly enhanced an already stunning volume. Nonetheless, the collaboration "that might have been" indelibly linked in a brief but interesting manner the careers of three of California's consummate artists—Paul Landacre, Edward Weston, and Robinson Jeffers.

Anthony L. Lehman teaches English at Chaffey High School in Ontario, California. His biography, *Paul Landacre: A Life and a Legacy*, was published by Dawson's Book Shop in 1983.

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# Elected to Membership

The two classifications above Regular Membership at \$40 per year are Patron Membership at \$125 per year and Sustaining Membership at \$60 per year.

New Sustaining Members	Address	Sponsor
Richard Pryor	Oakland	James M. Dourgarian
Dorothy Sloan	Austin, Texas	Sally V. Zaiser
Gloria Stuart	Los Angeles	Albert Sperisen
	0	1
New Regular Members		
Mr. & Mrs. Peter T. Allen	San Francisco	David F. Myrick
Philip Thomas Bevis	Los Angeles	George Houle
Robert J. Chandler	Concord	August H. Brandenburg, Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. William		
W. Collier	Mill Valley	Carl M. Mosher
Rosario Andrea Curletti	Santa Barbara	Jean S. Menzies
Thomas E. Curran III	San Francisco	Joanie Redington Morgan
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R. Glen Fuller	Oracle, Arizona	James A. Fuller
Morris A. Gelfand	Roslyn Harbor, N.Y.	James R. Moore
Irma Grabhorn	San Francisco	Albert E. Long, м.D.
David Holman	Austin, Texas	David Belch
Jacqueline Koenig	Bellevue, Wash.	James M. Dourgarian
Edna M. Mahler	San Francisco	Brenda McNamara
Barbara Meinhard	Santa Ana	James Lorson
John Paxton	San Francisco	Maurice Powers
Drs. John & Catherine		
Phelan	Westlake Village	Former Members
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	Michigan	Former Member
Beverly Weber	San Francisco	Ann Whipple
Gould & Charlotte		

Dallas, Texas

Whaley

Decherd Turner

#### PREMIUM DUES NOTICE

The following Member has transferred from Regular to Patron Membership (\$125):

Norman Coliver

San Francisco

The following Member has transferred from Regular to Sustaining Membership (\$60):

Donald Fleming

Orinda

# Gifts and Acquisitions

From Thomas Rae, proprietor of The Black Pennell Press, Greenock, Scotland, the Club has received a copy of his latest book, Adventures of John M'Alpine, a Native Highlander. Interestingly, this is a reprint of the first book printed in Greenock, 1780, and the Press has done a handsome job of it, retaining the long "s" which, as the editor admits, "while recognizing that it may be initially off-putting to the modern reader, the eye quickly becomes accustomed to it and the inclusion does give the printed text the authentic appearance of an 18th-century page. . . ." We agree, and to complete that theme, he has used Caslon Old Style and wood engravings by Kathleen M. Lindsley, in the old tradition of printing from the original blocks. This is a delightful book printed on Zerkall mouldmade paper and hand-cased in quarter-leather with Japanese wood veneer over boards. Our thanks to Thomas Rae.

Albert Sperisen

Another member of the Club was invited to give a talk on the subject of Fine Printing at the Library of Congress' Center for the Book: Ward Ritchie's talk on October second was "The Los Angeles Tradition," a companion to the first talk on the subject, "The San Francisco Tradition," made by our own James D. Hart, the published version of which was reviewed in the last issue of the *Quarterly News-Letter*, Autumn 1985. Ward's talk will soon be printed by Patrick Reagh's press in Glendale.

A.S.

And while on the subject of Ward Ritchie, we're pleased to report a recent production of Laguna Verde Imprenta, Ward's private press in his home in Laguna Beach, California: *Jane Grabhorn of the Jumbo Press*. Originally a talk of Ward's made at Scripps College where Jane was at one time a student, this is an amusing collection of remembrances of her as a printer and an

incomparable wit. Ward has printed and illustrated this small book with reproductions of some of Jane's tongue-in-cheek ephemeral pieces, all very amusing. The book is cased in a three-quarter leather spine with a very attractive checkered paper over boards, and the title-page is printed in seven colors plus black! Copies may be had through any fine book dealer, or directly from the printer, 34 Emerald Bay, Laguna Beach, California 92651.

A.S.

From the compilers, members John Crichton and Jennifer Larson, we have received "A Consanguineous Tree," recording the staff members of John Howell–Books from its founding in 1912 until its demise in 1984, many of whom (including the compilers, of course!) went on to other careers in the book world. Designed and printed by Christopher Stinehour for Mr. Crichton and Ms. Larson as a keepsake for the dinner meeting of The Roxburghe Club and the International Association of Bibliophiles, October 7, 1985, this is a handsome broadside, indeed, and a charming history of one of San Francisco's foremost antiquarian bookshops and the staff members whose bookselling careers it launched.

From member Msgr. Francis J. Weber we have received a number of gifts recently: The Last of the Missions: A Documentary History of San Francisco de Solano (one of 350 copies); A Bicentennial Compendium of Maynard J. Geiger's The Life and Times of Fr. Junipero Serra; and two miniature books, John Henry Cardinal Newman (1810–1890), with a postage stamp frontispiece depicting Cardinal Newman, and The World's Most Widely-Read Book, designed to resemble a matchbook, and printed for Msgr. Weber by Richard Hoffman, as a keepsake for Grand Conclave III, the annual gathering of the Miniature Book Society. From the Serra Bicentennial Commission, we have received a copy of Some Reminiscences about Fray Junipero Serra, edited by Msgr. Weber, and containing an essay by him, and one by another Club member, W. Michael Mathes. As always, we are grateful to the prolific Msgr. Weber for his continued generosity.

Dr. S. Baxter Sperry has presented us with a copy of the *Checklist* of the work of his Laurel Hill Press in Galt, California, for which many thanks.

Member Ethel Crockett has given the Club an interesting pamphlet, U.S. Books Abroad: Neglected Ambassadors by Curtis G. Benjamin, published by the Library of Congress' Center for the Book, as part of its ongoing effort "to promote reading and to enhance appreciation of the book and the printed

word." It might be noted that the Center for the Book's "Year of the Book" in 1987 coincides with the Club's own seventy-fifth Anniversary, plans for the celebration of which are currently underway. Our thanks to Ethel.

Our new Sustaining Member from Los Angeles, Gloria Stuart, has informed us that, inspired by her friend Ward Ritchie, she's founded her own press, Imprenta Glorias, and she sends an example of her work—a handsome keepsake on The Watts Towers, which she produced for the International Association of Bibliophiles on the occasion of their visit to Los Angeles. We're delighted to welcome Imprenta Glorias to the fold, and to thank Ms. Stuart for her gift.

#### **Book Review**

Images & Myths: Coyote Suite I & II. Daniel Owen Stolpe. Foreword by Dennis Banks; Anthropological notes by Lowell John Bean; Introduction by Marilyn Hanson. Aptos Press, Aptos, California 1985. Woodcuts by the author. Unnumbered pages.

Among the Indian tribes of the northern hemisphere, Coyote stories are plentiful and appreciated. This applies also to non-Indians who have had the opportunity to hear them. It would seem that every anthropologist who has worked with Native Americans has at least one Old Man Coyote story in his research notes, and many of these stories have appeared in printed form. Old Man Coyote is all things to all beings, and is characterized by Dr. William Bright as being "divine, creator, Lawgiver, trickster, buffoon and victim." Dr. Paul Radin describes him as "at the same time creator and destroyer, giver and negator, he who dupes others and is always duped himself. . . . He possesses no values, moral or social."

And now comes Mr. Stolpe, who depicts Old Man Coyote in all his mischievousness, in woodcuts beautifully reproduced in *Coyote Suite I & II*. At first glance one might be led to believe that Mr. Stolpe was an Indian because of the execution of his woodcuts but this is not so. However, it is evident that he has an "Indian heart" as a result of his having lived with the Snohomish tribe in Washington for several years.

He has exhibited countrywide and his work appears in the permanent collections of the Smithsonian Institution and museums in Utah, California, and Massachusetts.

MICHAEL HARRISON

#### **Publication Notes**

As its Winter 1985 publication the Club is proud to present a volume which will appeal strongly to those interested in the history of fine printing, hand-craftsmanship, and the private press: a new edition of *The Allen Press Bibliography*. Our edition is a facsimile of the Allens' now unobtainable 1981 hand-printed edition plus important additions to date, original leaves, a complete checklist of ephemera by Steve Corey, an Appreciation by Carey S. Bliss, an Epilogue by Lewis Allen, and a completely updated index. The Allens' original *Bibliography* was limited to 140 copies. This new edition makes this

important bibliography available to a much wider audience.

For almost a half century, Lewis and Dorothy Allen of The Allen Press have enjoyed an international reputation in the handpress field. They have devoted themselves to producing de luxe limited editions entirely by hand: printing with hand-set types on damped handmade paper, employing nineteenth-century handpresses, and using the best of hand-crafted materials. This husband-and-wife collaboration performs all facets of bookmaking: choosing the text, developing the typography, hand-setting the type, printing on the handpress in several colors, illuminating by hand, binding, and publishing. Through 1985, as a full-time vocation, they have produced fifty-one titles of some 10,000 copies, including seven titles for the Club.

An unusual feature of this *Bibliography*—truly an autobiography of the Allens' life in printing—is the detailed "Notes" on each title in which they explain how the subject was selected and why the illustrations, decorations, color, and binding were chosen. Further, they recall specific successes and failures, pleasures and frustrations of their demanding craft. In addition, the *Bibliography* includes more than ninety examples of artwork from the Allens' books and ephemera, as well as reproductions of leaves from their books—

and at least one original leaf has been tipped into each volume.

The facsimile section of this revised work is presented in black and white and full color and printed by offset lithography under the direction of George Waters, at Mastercraft Press, San Francisco. The new material, with illustrations from the Allens' last five books, is printed letterpress by Arlen Philpott

at his Tamal Land Press, with typography by Lewis Allen.

The present edition follows the format of the original, being a folio, 13½ x 9 inches. The handsome binding of full cloth from Holland with the title printed in gold on the spine and a decorative Columbian handpress printed in black on the cover, is protected by an acetate jacket. The binding has been executed by The Schuberth Bindery, where the facsimile and original leaves were inserted.

### Serendipity

The Club was pleased to help welcome the Fourteenth Biennial Congress of the International Association of Bibliophiles during the Northern California portion of the Congress located in San Francisco October 7 through 11. Mr. Bernard M. Rosenthal was the overall organizer of the Congress as well as the local arrangements Chair in San Francisco. The Club's support was gratefully acknowledged in the official program in response to a commitment of funds voted by our Board from the Public Programs budget to help defray some of the expenses of the Congress if necessary. In addition the Club's library was listed in the handsome brochure compiled by Mary H. Silloway and designed and printed by Peter Koch entitled "Rare Book & Manuscript Collections in the Libraries of the San Francisco Bay Area" (excluding The Bancroft Library and Stanford) which was given to each member of the Congress in San Francisco. (Additional copies of the useful brochure are available from Mr. Rosenthal at 251 Post Street, San Francisco, California 94108.)

Among the highlights of the week were visits to the home of Dr. Haskell F. Norman to view his astonishing collection of medicine and science on Monday October 7, and The Roxburghe Club of San Francisco's elegant buffet reception that evening at the Palace of the Legion of Honor. On Wednesday the ninth there was a trip to the Monterey Museum of Art to view our former President Sanford Berger's unmatched collection of William Morris exhibited especially for the Congress. There were also trips to Stanford, UC Berkeley (including The Bancroft Library), and the San Francisco Public Library. The latter featured an important exhibit entitled "The Book Arts in America—a selection of contemporary works—fine printing, calligra—

phy, bookbinding" for which a useful checklist was produced.

The earlier week in Los Angeles had been just as memorable—a truly unforgettable Congress—and thanks to every Club Member who contributed in various ways to the success of the Congress. As a happy pendent we wish to thank the Southern California hosts of the Congress, in the person of Muir Dawson, Chair, for giving the Club a copy of the book which each member of the Congress received in Los Angeles. This elegant hardback book is entitled A Bibliophile's Los Angeles—Essays for the International Association of Bibliophiles. This welcome book of 186 pages containing eight essays was edited by John Bidwell with the assistance of Carol R. Briggs and has a charming frontispiece map by Vance Gerry of "A Bibliophile's Map of Los Angeles," which folds out. It was designed and printed by Patrick Reagh of Glendale, who is perhaps the finest printer in Southern California today, in an edition of 350 copies. The book and much else besides was made possible by a most generous grant from the Ahmanson Foundation.

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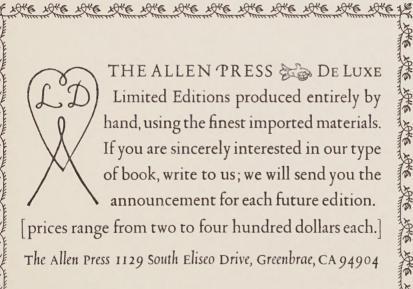
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